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U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20515

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February 23, 2011

The Honorable John Fleming
The Honorable Bill Flores
The Honorable Louie Gohmert
The Honorable Jeff Landry
The Honorable David Rivera
The Honorable Steve Southerland

Dear Gulf State Committee Member,

In discussing the work of the Natural Resources Committee, we've heard directly from you, and other Members of Congress from the Gulf region, who are concerned over the Obama Administration's refusal to issue new shallow and deep water drilling permits in a timely, efficient manner. Indeed, the Department of the Interior has even been held in contempt by a federal judge over its failure to issue permits. It is very evident that real economic pain is being felt by families, businesses and communities in the Gulf as a result of the President's *de facto* moratorium. The Natural Resources Committee will be actively addressing this issue as it directly relates to our top priorities of economic growth, job creation, national security and oversight.

Over the coming weeks, the Natural Resources Committee will be conducting an aggressive schedule of hearings on the Obama Administration's slow-walking of permits and the impacts of the *de facto* moratorium on our economy, jobs and U.S. energy security.

The Committee is currently planning:

- A Full Committee hearing on March 3, 2011 with Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar to discuss the FY 2012 budget and other policies, including the *de facto* moratorium;
- A Full Committee hearing on March 16, 2011 to hear directly from impacted States, communities, and local businesses;
- A Full Committee hearing on March 30, 2011 with Michael Bromwich, Director of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), to discuss the BOEM budget and permitting policies; and
- A field hearing and site visit in Louisiana in April during the Congressional District work period.

While the people and local businesses of the Gulf have been hardest hit by the Administration's delays, the need to resume offshore energy production is of national importance. Offshore drilling supports thousands of Americans jobs throughout the country. In addition, nearly a third of all U.S. oil is produced in the Gulf of Mexico.

With gasoline prices rising and political unrest spreading throughout the Middle East, the United States must act now to responsibly develop our own American energy resources. The Administration's effort to block access to American offshore oil and natural gas exacerbates the problem and deepens our dangerous dependence on foreign energy.

With thousands of American jobs at risk, the Natural Resources Committee will be conducting thorough and sustained oversight of offshore energy production. Thank you for your hard work and dedication to this issue.

Sincerely,



Doc Hastings
Chairman
Committee on Natural Resources



Doug Lamborn
Chairman
Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources

cc: All Natural Resources Committee Members
All Gulf State Members of Congress